

FULL COMMISSION MEETING THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2008 3:30 – 6:00 PM COMMISSION OFFICE

MINUTES

Commissioners

Anne Ashmore-Hudson, Chair Marvin Bowser
Christopher Cowan
Lou Hill Davidson
Rebecca Fishman
Rhona Wolfe Friedman
Rogelio A. Maxwell
Tendani Mpulubusi
Bernard Richardson
Deborah Royster
Michael R. Sonnenreich
Judith Terra
Lavinia Wohlfarth

Staff

Gloria Nauden, Executive Director Lionell Thomas, Deputy Director Dolores Kendrick, Poet Laureate Catherine Cleary, Grants Manager Moshe Adams, Grants Assistant Ebony Blanks, Program Coordinator Shyree Mezick, Program Coordinator

I. Call to Order:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:45 pm.

II.Approval of Minutes:

The Chair asked for the Executive Committee members to review the Executive Committee minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Friedman moved and seconded by Commissioner Wohlfarth that the Executive Committee minutes from October 2008 be accepted.

*Motion Carried

The Chair asked for the Commission members to review the Full Commission minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Wohlfarth and seconded by Commissioner Sonnenreich that the minutes from November 2008 be accepted.

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

III. Poet Laureate's Report:

Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick commented that she will report to the Commission during the January meeting.

IV. <u>Director's Report</u>:

The Executive Director reminded the commissioners about Holiday Music in Public Places, a free music program that the Commission offers.

V.Chair's Report:

The Chair reminded the commissioners about the upcoming Arts Eve DC event for children, the first program of its kind that the Commission has undertaken.

VI.DC Arts International:

Shyree Mezick, program assistant, introduced herself and panel representative, Aimee Fullman. Under the direction and guidance of the Commissioner Convener Lavinia Wohlfarth and Shyree Mezick, the program coordinator, panelists adhered to the recommended review process. The panel met in one session to complete its application review and recommendations.

A total of 25 applications were submitted and \$200,000.00 was available to fund the applicants. Of the 25 eligible applications reviewed, the total amount of funds requested was \$416,389.50 and the panel recommended funding for 12 applicants, totaling \$200,000.00 based on their merit. No funds remained unallocated. A mandatory workshop will be created for all funded grantees.

Ms. Fullman stated that the panel was impressed by the diversity of DC artists and the representation of so many artistic disciplines. The panel recognized this program as being in the beginning stages of its development. The Panel Representative drew special attention the applicant ranked number one.

The Chair thanked the panel for their diligence.

The panel made the following recommendations for policy and program improvements:

- 1. The panel recommended sorting the applications into panel binders, rather than sending loose application materials in large boxes.
- 2. The panel recommended that staff should pre-screen applications for eligibility and vet budgets for accuracy.
- 3. The panel suggested condensing evaluation criteria to clarify the programs goals for applicants and panelists.
- 4. The panel suggested that the Agency refine the focus of the grant program goals to determine what we are trying to achieve and that the Agency decide if student performances should be eligible to receive funding.
- 5. The panel suggested developing an infrastructure for a cooling off period between applications to this grant program.
- 6. The panel recommended developing clearer definition of cultural exchange.
- 7. The panel recommended modifying the budget form so that the expenses and the revenue columns include the same line items.
- 8. The panel recommended dividing the community organizations projects from the arts organizations projects.
- 9. The panel suggested compiling a list of best practices for the use of the touring organizations (securing an interpreter, how to be a good traveler, researching the customs of the host country, etc.).
- 10. The panel recommended adding a line to the grant letter that asks the grantee to contact the US Embassy in the country to which they will travel.
- 11. The panel suggested having a meeting with the grantees and including a representative of the State Department.
- 12. The panel recommended stressing that work samples must be as relevant as possible to the proposed project.
- 13. The panel recommended mandating that applicants indicate if matching funds are pending or committed.
- 14. The panel recommended using the primary and secondary reader system and, as part of that system, asking for two copies of the work sample so that the lead reader can review it before the meeting.

Discussion:

Commissioner Wohlfarth and the Legislative and Grants Manager both stated that the DC Arts International panel wondered about the level of actual cultural exchange and the grantees' ability to serve as cultural ambassadors and mentioned the question of security.

The Chair recognized that the program was new and in the beginning stages. The Deputy Director answered the Chair's questions about where the grantees would go abroad. The Vice Chair questioned whether the granted organizations would be required to provide insurance for their program participants.

The Deputy Director mentioned that a State Department representative was scheduled to attend workshops to discuss health insurance, safety, and security with grantees. The Poet Laureate reiterated the need for grantees to have health insurance while abroad. Commissioner Sonnenreich stated that the Commission would not be responsible for health issues because the Commission is a contracting organization. As result, the Commission would not be liable. He emphasized the Commission should be very diligent in assessing the track record of the institution that is making the request in order to address safety and reliability.

Commissioner Sonnenreich suggested raising the maximum grant amount available under this program on the grant. He felt that the maximum amount may be to low for the Commission to be a true participant in this program. Commissioner Cowan asked about the feasibility to granting more funds to applicants without increasing the total budget for the program.

The Chair asked about matching funds and any stipulations within the program. The Legislative and Grants Manager explained that the panelists wanted to note what was secured funding and what pending approval from other funding sources was.

The Commission questioned how DC would benefit from the cultural exchange. The Deputy Director mentioned that the exchange would increase the artist's ability to present their work to different cultures. The Chair added that there is value in bringing arts and experience back to a broader audience.

Commissioner Royster noticed the disproportionate amount of certain wards being represented and Commissioner Mpulubusi questioned outreach efforts to underserved communities. Commissioner Wohlfarth responded that there tend to usually be certain wards with greater representation.

Following discussion it was moved by Commissioner Sonnenreich and seconded by Commissioner Maxwell that the Commission approve the funding recommendations as presented.

*Motion Carried

VII. Small Projects Program:

Ebony Blanks, Arts Program Coordinator, introduced the program and Janette Glover, the panel representative. Under the direction and guidance of the Commissioner/Convener Lavinia Wohlfarth and the Arts Program Coordinator, panelists adhered to the recommended review process. The panel met in one session to complete its application review and recommendations.

A total of 60 applications were submitted. The total amount of funds requested was \$118,468.00. Of the 60 reviewed, four were deemed ineligible. The panel recommended funding for 21 applicants totaling \$41,212.15 based on their merit.

The panel made the following recommendations for policy and program improvements:

- 1. Applicants should be encouraged to articulate as thoroughly as possible rather than leave application vague.
- 2. Suggest that the Commission invest in having an online workshop.
- 3. Suggest that Artist Fellowship grants have more than one deadline a year.
- 4. Application checklist should use a word limit instead of the text "up to one page" so that it is clear to artists that are not writers or administrators the importance of a thorough explanation.

Commissioner Bowser questioned why not many grantees were funded. The Arts Program Coordinator explained that the program will award funding through two more deadlines.

Discussion:

Commissioner Wohlfarth commended the panel for pulling out the grantees from amongst the total amount of applicants. She requested the Commission improve grant writing by educating more applicants about the application process.

Commissioner Friedman suggested advertising the Commission and its programs through Facebook.

Commissioner Sonnenreich asked about increasing the amount funded to the grantees. He felt that the current amount would make a very small effect. Ms. Blanks mentioned that the applicants usually request funding for only a part of a larger project and that \$2000 was adequate for them. Commissioner Sonnenreich suggested asking former grantees if the amount granted was sufficient. The Executive Director added that the staff should inform applicants about the other grants available.

Conclusion:

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Sonnenreich and seconded by Commissioner Wohlfarth that the Commission approve the funding recommendations as presented.

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

VIII.Policy Recommendations:

The Chair explained the policy recommendation process to the Commission.

1. <u>Panel Recommendation:</u> The FY 2009 Cultural Facilities Program Advisory Panel recommends mandating the development director, or a member of the applying organization's staff with equal or greater authority, attend a workshop to improve the quality of the application.

Conclusion:

In response to the panel's policy recommendation, the Deputy Director commented that it is the applicants' responsibility to craft a good application and added that the staff would create touch-points for applicants to learn how to create better applications. Commissioner Friedman suggested making a strong recommendation to applicants to attend the workshops.

It was moved by Commissioner Friedman and seconded by Commissioner Wohflarth that the Commission approve the staff recommendation not to mandate workshops but emphasize the Commission's strong recommendation that a representative attend2nd by Commissioner Wohlfarth.

* Motion Carried

Unanimous

- 2)Commissioner Royster asked for an explanation of the UPSTART and East of the River grant programs. Commissioner Bowser suggested that the Commission develop more outreach efforts so that all sections of the District are equally aware of the Commission's activities.
- 3) See motion and approval as above.

The Chair explained the policy.

Motion – Commissioner Davidson moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd by Commissioner Fishman

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

4) The Chair read and explained the policy recommendation.

Motion – Commissioner Friedman moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd by Commissioner Terra.

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

5) Commissioner Friedman explained the panel recommendation and the staff recommendation. She agreed with the staff's recommendation. The Chair explained the panel process for the new Commissioners. The Commissioner Friedman stated that the panel is very thorough in their assessments.

Motion – Commissioner Friedman moved to accept staff recommended, 2nd by Commissioner Wohlfarth.

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

6) Motion – Commissioner Sonnenreich moved to accept staff recommendation, 2nd Commissioner Terra

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

7) Commissioner Royster read the policy recommendation. Commissioner Friedman asked what would happen after the call goes out on our website.

Motion - Commissioner Friedman moved to accept the staff recommendation with language stating that draft reading is available, 2nd by Commissioner Cowan.

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

11 in favor, 1 abstention

Commissioner Bowser then suggested that a mandatory deadline for drafts be added to the language. Commissioner Bowser emphasized drafting becoming mandatory. Commissioner Davidson felt that the policy was double talk. The Chair clarified that this policy change was for the DC UPSTART program only.

8) Commissioner Cowan read the recommendation.

Motion – Commissioner Royster moved to accept staff recommendation, 2nd by Commissioner Cowan.

*Motion Carried

*Unanimous

9) Commissioner Sonnenreich read the recommendation. He suggested that there be only one panel and one deadline. Commissioner Sonnenreich did not feel it necessary to have separate panels.

Motion – Commissioner Royster moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd by Commissioner Richardson.

*Motion Failed

*2 in favor, 8 opposed

10) Davidson read and explained recommendation.

Motion - Commissioner Royster moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd Commissioner Friedman.

*Motion Carried

11) Commissioner Fishman reviewed the panel recommendation and explained them to the Commission.

Motion - Commissioner Fishman moved to accept the panel recommendation, 2nd Commissioner Sonnenreich.

Motion Carried

*Unanimous

12) Commissioner Fishman further recapped the Cultural Facilities Program panel recommendations. The Deputy Director explained the priority components of the CFP grant and ramifications of lowering the cap of the grant. Commissioner Fishman wanted to keep the cap and balance out the program funding. Commissioner Sonnenreich felt that the number should not be there at all but, instead, it should be up to the applicant to access whether they have sustainable capacity or not. Commissioner Davidson suggested different categories. Commissioner Mpulubusi wanted a lower cap to balance the process. The Chair suggested that the money cap discussion was not getting to the solution. She suggested the staff review the policy recommendation and make it clearer. She then added that the policy merited further discussion. Commissioner Sonnenreich felt that the facility could get built and the organization may not be able to run the facility. He suggested helping the smaller org by offering multi-year grants. Motion – Commissioner Mpulubusi moved to accept staff recommendation, 2nd Commissioner Bowser.

*Motion Carried

*7 in favor, 5 opposed

13) Commissioner Friedman explained the policy recommendation and staff recommendation.

Motion – Commissioner Sonnenreich moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd Commissioner Wohlfarth

Motion Carried

*Unanimous

14) Commissioner Maxwell read the policy recommendation. Commissioner Royster asked about the nature of the recommendation. Catherine Cleary explained that the panelists were not fully confident in assessing applications due to the panelists' limited artistic experience. Commissioner Richardson asked for more explanation of the rationale behind the panel recommendation. The Deputy Director responded that the panel wanted to be more fair

Motion – Commissioner Maxwell moved to not accept the staff recommendation and, instead, moved to create a new category for interdisciplinary artists, 2nd Commissioner Sonnenreich. Commissioner Maxwell then withdrew the motion.

Motion amended.

Motion – Commissioner Maxwell moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd by Commissioner Sonnenreich

Motion Carried

*Unanimous

15) Commissioner Cowan read the policy recommendation.

Motion – Commissioner Wohlfarth moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd Commissioner Sonnenreich.

Motion Carried

16) Commissioner Richardson read the policy recommendation.

Motion - Commissioner Davidson moved to accept the staff recommendation, 2nd by Commissioner Wohlfarth

Motion Carried

*Unanimous

17) Commissioner Mpulubusi read the policy recommendation.

Motion – Commissioner Maxwell moved to accept the staff recommendation and give an extra \$750 to recipients of the Young Artist Program grant for marketing purposes, 2nd by Commissioner Wohlfarth.

Motion Carried

*Unanimous

DCCAH Appeal Policy Process

The Chair recapped the recent appeal issues and the codified appeal process. The Chair suggested the Commission take a close look at the current draft of the appeal process. Commissioner Friedman took issue with the draft. She suggested the draft go to the city attorney. The Commission has no prior written policy.

DCCAH Public Art Policy

The Commission's next meeting will be a full Commission meeting in January.

Commissioner Mpulubusi had many ideas to discuss with the Commission. The

Chair suggested creating ad hoc committee for further discussion. Commissioner

Davidson noted that she would like to be a member of that committee.

Commissioner Davidson recommended that the Commission attend more programs at THEARC. She would like to have a meeting at THEARC. The Chair recommended the next Commission meeting be held at venues where we fund already.

Commissioner Richardson and Commissioner Cowan commended The Ledroit Park Community Art Project.

IX.Adjournment:

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Sonnenreich motioned to adjourn, 2nd by Commissioner Wohlfarth. 6:05pm

Motion Carried